



English xxx: Cultural History of English

[date/time]

Rosina Lippi-Green

[contact info]

Office hours: []

course.

Prerequisites: English 370 (or 201) is a non-negotiable prerequisite for this

Requirements and Evaluation

▶ You must keep a class journal/notebook which you will be required to hand in on occasion. Written assignments will be completed directly in the notebook. You will be allowed to use your notebook during the midterm exam, and therefore I suggest you use it to record both classroom notes and reading notes. This notebook should not be a three ring binder.

▶ There are reading assignments for each class. For each reading assignment, you must have recorded three suggestions for discussion questions in your notebooks, clearly marked as such. At the beginning of every class you must write the best or most pressing of your three questions on a blackboard.

▶ Very rarely there will be a problem set, to be completed in your class notebook as homework.

▶ There is an in-class midterm (short answer and short essay). You will have the use of your notebook, but not your text.

▶ The final exam is a take-home short essay (two pages maximum). It may be based in part on the outlines produced over the course of the quarter in conjunction with classroom presentations.

▶ Each student will make one classroom presentation. Topics will be assigned on the first day of class and cannot be changed thereafter. Presentations should be *no less than ten and no more than fifteen minutes long* (I will have to stop you beyond that point). You must hand out to the class an outline of your presentation (not the TEXT of your presentation) and the outline must include citations for those works you consulted. The outline should conclude with a two or three sentence summary, in which you condense the most important findings of your research. I encourage use of multimedia in your presentation (the overhead projector, the vcr, any materials you would like to bring in to demonstrate or discuss) but **not at the cost of content**. Presentations will be graded on: substantive content (how well did you research the topic? how well did you synthesize what you found?); clarity of presentation; quality of the outline/summary presented. A good outline will have long-term value as a resource and reference. Include your name, the date, and the topic you are presenting at the top of the outline. Please allow yourself at least a week to prepare this presentation. I would be more than happy to help anyone locate sources (but not the day before the presentation is due!). Many times very good materials are available on the web; a multitude of volumes will be on reserve in the library. Please note that most of the topics listed for presentation are touched on in the reading. Your presentation should move beyond that material.

▶ Thoughtful contribution to discussions is an important part of your performance and will be evaluated. If you are not present, you cannot participate. Attendance will be taken at every class.

Required Textbook: *English, history, diversity and change*. D. Graddol, D. Leith, J. Swann. Routledge.

General Guidelines

▶ Come and talk to me about little problems before they become big problems.

▶ Come and talk to me in my office hours; or make an appointment. If you show up unannounced I won't be able to help, and we'll both feel uncomfortable.

▶ Email is generally better than the phone. I check my email regularly.

▶ This syllabus is available on the web, with links to sites which may be of help and interest.

▶ A statement of cooperation is attached hereto. Read it, sign it, turn it in to me; until you do I do not consider you completely enrolled in this class.

Syllabus

the management reserves the right to make changes!

1. 1/7 Introduction; scheduling of presentations
2. 1/12 Chapter 1: English Voices
 - (A) English in the British Isles (what is 'RP'?)
 - (B) English in the U.S. (what is 'Standard American English'?)
3. 1/14 Chapter 2: English Manuscripts: The emergence of a visual identity (guest lecturer: Rick Emmerson)
 - (A) Ink and writing implements: a short history
 - (B) What we write on: from bark to skins to woodpulp
4. 1/21 Chapter 3: Origins of English
 - (A) Celts and Celtic (who were they, what did they speak, where did they go?)
 - (B) Who was Arthur and what did he have to do with the Anglo-Saxons?
 - (C) Bede, and why his History remains a best seller
5. 1/26 Chapter 3 continued
 - (A) Old English: why it's a language worth learning
 - (B) Canterbury Tales: Tell us about them, and teach us a few lines
 - (C) 1066, and why it's important to the history of the language
6. 1/28 Chapter 4: Modernity and English as a (standardized) language
 - (A) Caxton: tell us something we don't know.
 - (B) the English Civil War (did you know they had one?)
 - (C) written vs. spoken language
7. 2/2 Chapter 4 continued
 - (A) the Great Vowel Shift
 - (B) Johnson's dictionary
 - (C) Jonathan Swift and early prescriptivism
8. 2/4 Review/catchup
9. **2/9 Midterm**
10. 2/11 Chapter 5: English-colonial to post-colonial
 - (A) Pidgins and how they come about
 - (B) Creoles (Caribbean)
11. 2/18 Chapter 5 continued
 - (A) History of Scots (literary Scots)
 - (B) Scots today: teach us some

- (C) English in India
- 12. 2/23 Chapter 6: Variation in English Grammar
 - (A) Double negation in English through history
 - (B) Grammar of AAVE
- 13. 2/25 Chapter 7: Accents of English
 - (A) The Northern Cities Chain Shift (or why midwestern folk sound so funny)
 - (B) ask/ax: the historical perspective on a marked sociolinguistic variable
 - (C) Canadian English
- 14. 3/2 Chapter 7 continued
 - (A) Native American English
 - (B) Hawai'ian Creole: what is it and who speaks it?
 - (C) Spanish in the U.S.
- 15. 3/4 Chapter 7 continued
 - (A) Amish language in Pennsylvania
 - (B) Cajun in Louisiana
 - (C) Varieties of English in New York City
- 16. 3/9 We brainstorm to construct a trivia quiz: *So you think you know English?* If it turns out well I'll publish it on a webpage.
- 17. 3/11 **Take home final distributed**
 - 3/18 **Take home final due**

I have received, read and understood the syllabus for this class; I understand and accept that my grade will be based in part on my attendance record and my participation in class.

Name (please print):

Signature:

Date:

Year of study:

Major:

Concentration:

What do you consider your mother tongue?

Where did you spend the majority of your childhood?

Have you had English 370 or 201? With whom, and when?

Telephone contact:

Email:

Do you check your email regularly?